

Protestant or Catholic ?



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CATHOLIC is used by Roman Catholics to denote themselves exclusively, for they believe that they alone constitute the true Church and that no-one else deserves the name Catholic.

But it is used by other people to describe those parts of the Christian Church which hold strictly to the traditional creeds and sacraments. In this sense of the word Catholic includes Roman Catholics, Orthodox and Anglicans, as well as smaller groups like the Old Catholics.

The Church of England is Catholic not in the former sense, for she is not subject to papal jurisdiction, but she is Catholic in the latter sense, for she holds to the Catholic creeds and sacraments.

In England there are thus two groupings of Christians which can be called Catholic,

the Church of England, which is
CATHOLIC

and the R.C. Church, which is
ROMAN CATHOLIC or *Catholic plus*.

There are also numerous groupings of varying shades of Protestantism, which can be called
Catholic minus.

Thus the Church of England stands for
the CATHOLIC FAITH pure and simple.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches
the CATHOLIC FAITH *plus*
certain beliefs about the Pope and the Blessed Virgin which are either erroneous or unnecessary.

PROTESTANT OR CATHOLIC?

IS the Church of England Protestant or Catholic?

It all depends what you mean by those words.

PROTESTANT sometimes means *non-papal*, and is used of all the people who separated themselves or were separated from the Roman Catholic Church at the time of the Reformation in the sixteenth century.

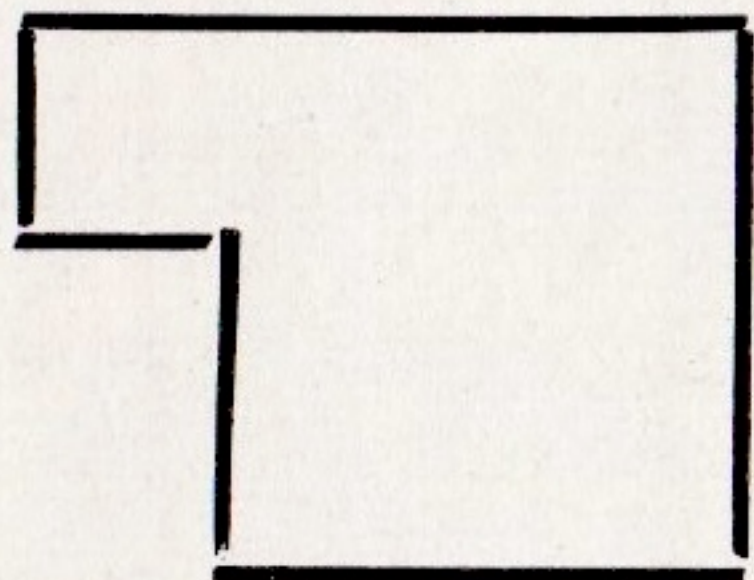
But it also sometimes means *non-Catholic*, describing people who repudiate the traditional Church order and sit loosely to creeds and sacraments.

The Church of England is Protestant in the former sense but not in the latter sense of the word: she is non-papal but not non-Catholic.

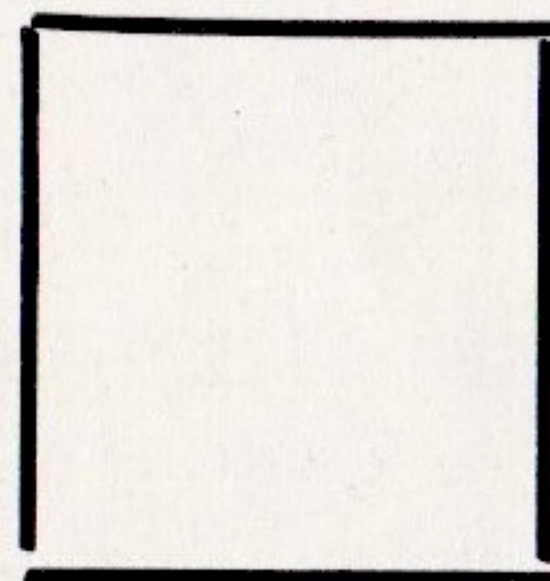
The Protestant or non-conformist bodies teach

the CATHOLIC FAITH *minus*

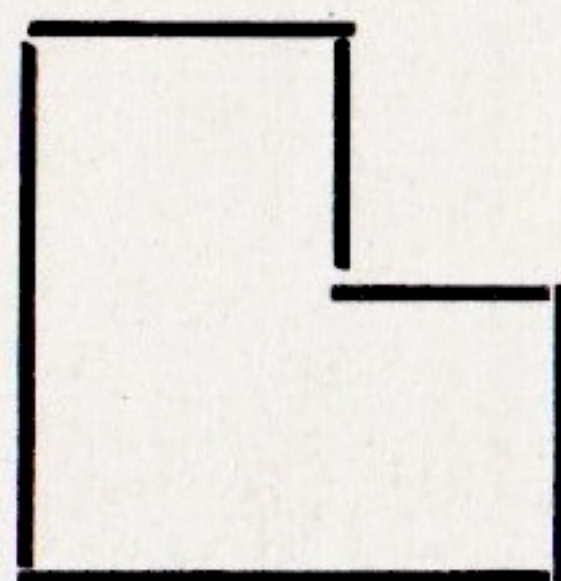
certain essentials, such as the episcopate and priesthood.



Roman Catholic,
Catholic plus.



Church of England,
Catholic.



Protestant,
Catholic minus.

There are perplexing differences of belief and practice in the Church of England. This is due to the fact that it is a buffer-state, and that some of her members are conscious of a special kinship with fellow Catholics and others with fellow Protestants. A measure of diversity is justified if it helps to bring the reunion of all Christian people nearer to fulfilment. But there must never be any surrender of Catholic truth: we must not "deal deceitfully with the word of God" (II Corinthians ii 17 mg.), but must "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

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